

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 03388 140303Z

72

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 131840Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8106

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 3388

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EEC, PFOR, UR

SUBJECT: EC SUMMIT: CSCE

REF: DUBLIN 484

1. SUMMARY: WE DO NOT THINK IT LEGITIMATE OR ACCURATE TO ALLOW THE STATE OF BREZHNEV'S HEALTH TO INFLUENCE IN A SUBSTANTIVE WAY THE COURSE OF CSCE NEGOTIATION. END SUMMARY.

2. BREZHNEV'S HEALTH IS, OF COURSE, PRECARIOUS, ALTHOUGH CAREFULLY TENDED. HOWEVER, WHILE THE NATURE OF BREZHNEV'S ILLNESS COMPELS HIM TO CONSERVE HIS STRENGTH, IT DOES NOT PREVENT HIM FROM ATTENDING TO MAJOR BUSINESS. ANY
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 03388 140303Z

ATTEMPT TO PUT A PRECISE DATE ON BREZHNEV'S DEPARTURE

FROM THE SCENE OR TO BASE NEGOTIATING STRATEGY ON HIS
UNCERTAIN HEALTH RUNS THE SERIOUS RISK OF ERROR.

3. WE QUESTION THAT BREZHNEV "MAY NOT LAST BEYOND THE
SUMMER" (PARA 4 REFTTEL) AND ASSUME THAT CROWDED UPCOMING
SCHEDULE OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC AFFAIRS WHICH WILL
REQUIRE BREZHNEV'S PRESENCE IS PREDICATED UPON SOVIET
EXPECTATION OF HIS CONTINUATION ON THE SCENE AT LEAST
THROUGH THE 25TH PARTY CONGRESS NEXT SPRING.

4. BEST BET IS THAT THE SOVIET LEADERS PROBABLY HOPE
FOR A RELATIVELY SMOOTH REVERSION TO COLLECTIVE LEADER-
SHIP DOMINATED BY THE REMAINING SENIOR LEADERS WHEN
BREZHNEV LEAVES OFFICE. IN ANY CASE, WE WOULD DOUBT THAT
BREZHNEV'S RELINQUISHMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHATEVER
REASON BEFORE THE END OF CSCE WOULD CHANGE THE SOVIET
LEADERSHIP LINE ON THE CONFERENCE. THE KREMLIN HAS
ACQUIRED MAJOR VESTED INTEREST IN THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLE-
TION OF THE CONFERENCE AND THE CONSENSUS OF THE CURRENT
LEADERSHIP IS SUCH THAT WE WOULD NOT FORESEE A MEANINGFUL
CHANGE IN THE SOVIET LINE ON CSCE WHETHER BREZHNEV IS AT
THE TOP OR NOT.
STOESSEL

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